GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:372
ANSWERED ON:28.03.2017
Documentary on Rhino Conservation
Chinnaraj Shri Gopalakrishnan;Singh Shri Parvesh Sahib

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the recent documentary released by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) on rhino conservation in Kaziranga National Park and if so, the details thereof;
(b) whether the documentary has presented the Park and conservation efforts in a bad light which are away from reality and if so, the details thereof;
(c) whether the Government has taken any action against the documentary makers and if so, the details thereof;
(d) whether the permission to shoot the documentary was granted before the making and release of such documentary and if so, the details thereof; and
(e) whether the Government has any standard operating procedure for grant of clearances for such projects in order to prevent such unsavoury incidences in the future and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE)

(a), (b), (c), (d) & (e) :- A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

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STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a), (b), (c), (d) & (e) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. *372 ON DOCUMENTARY ON RHINO CONSERVATION DUE FOR REPLY ON 28.03.2017

(a) & (b) The Government is aware of a documentary released by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in which they have misrepresented the immunity provided to forest personnel under section 197 of the CrPC as a "shoot to kill" policy. There were several inconsistencies between the synopsis provided by the producer and final documentary released for airing. The documentary was not submitted by producer for preview by the authorized committee as per the undertaking given by the producer.

(c) The BBC has been disallowed filming in tiger reserves for a period of five years.

(d) The permission granted before making the film included the condition for preview before release. However, the documentary was not submitted to the authorities for preview.

(e) The National Tiger Conservation Authority as per power vested under section 38 O(2) and 38 (O)(1)(k) of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 has issued a standard set of conditions in this regard. The details are at Annexure-I.

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ANNEXURE-I

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (e) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. *372 ON DOCUMENTARY ON RHINO CONSERVATION DUE FOR REPLY ON 28.03.2017

Standard set of conditions which need to be adhered to by filmmakers issued by the National Tiger Conservation Authority as per power vested under section 38 O(2) and 38 (O)(1)(k) of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972

1. Under no circumstances tigress with newly born cubs in particular and tigers in general should be disturbed for filming.
2. The photography/shooting of film should not be done in close proximity of the animal to avoid any disturbance to its natural behaviour.
3. No filming should be done after sunset.
4. Use of aircraft will not be permitted.
5. Artificial feeding to wild animals will not be done.
6. The filming unit will not construct any hideout.
7. Prior permission of the concerned State Government/agencies concerned should be taken.
8 It will be ensured by the Agency that views of the concerned Wildlife Authorities of the State should be taken into consideration and recorded and documented in the film.
9. Initiatives of the Government towards conservation should also be highlighted especially in respect of village relocation.
10. The theme of shooting should have the prior approval of the State Chief Wildlife Warden.

11. A minimum distance of 30 meters should be ensured while filming the tiger.
12. The rushes should be shown to a Committee of MoEF for enabling us to ensure that the policies of the Government vis-Ã -vis Wildlife Conservation are not projected in a distorted manner.
13. Special permission for entry/ filming, if any, relating to the area may also be obtained from the concerned competent authority.
14. Filming is to be strictly restricted within the tourism zone identified as per the comprehensive guidelines issued by the National Tiger Conservation Authority.
15. The 'No Objection Certificate' (NOC) is subject to the entry period permitted by the State Government with respect to closure period/ monsoon etc.
16. The filming team/ crew should abide by the National Park/ Wildlife Sanctuary Rules, besides the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, the Indian Forest Act, 1927, the Biological Diversity Act, 2002, and other related legislations, and under no circumstances any person of the said filming team/ crew be allowed to collect any biological/ non-biological specimen/ object/ artefact from the said Protected Area (PA).
17. The filming team/ crew should follow the comprehensive tourism guidelines issued by the NTCA while filming.
18. Efforts of the State Government concerned in this context, shall be duly highlighted.

Besides above conditions, the NOC is "subject to other mandatory clearances as and when required".

A copy of the finished documentary shall be sent to the Member Secretary, National Tiger Conservation Authority, Government of India, New Delhi.

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